Reducing Floatable Debris in the Sound

Litter, debris, and trash floating in LIS coastal waters and washing up on LIS shorelines can be a nuisance to, or hazard for boaters, beach-goers, bathers, fishermen, and other recreational or commercial LIS users. Floatable debris can harm wildlife and living marine resources, and it diminishes the aesthetic enjoyment of the Sound as well as the surrounding environment.

CCMP Strategy

Floatable debris contributes to unsightly, unsanitary, or unhealthy beach and shoreline conditions, and can adversely affect environmental quality and the health of living marine resources, water-dependent birds and other aquatic life, This type of pollution can reduce the market value of shoreline property, affecting the regional economy, and can also adversely affect public perception of the health of the Sound. This CCMP priority area identifies two principal management actions: 1) controlling floatable debris from combined sewer overflows (CSOs) and storm sewers; and 2) increasing floatable debris cleanup efforts.

Environmental Indicators/Results/Trends

Programs in place to control sources of debris to the Sound include regional or statewide anti-litter campaigns, beach cleanup and adopt-a-spot programs, municipal street sweeping, refuse pick-up and recycling programs, solid waste facility management practices, public awareness campaigns, and enforcement of local ordinances. Indicators for this element include: miles of beaches cleaned; tons of trash removed; and numbers of volunteers involved. Hundreds of volunteers around the Sound annually spend thousands of hours collecting, sorting, recording, and properly disposing of thousands of pounds of debris from miles of LIS beaches. Plastics account for more than 50 percent of debris collected, with cigarette butts vastly outnumbering all other trash picked up.

2001 Highlights:

- Efforts to control combined sewer overflows (CSOs) and improve stormwater management, described under *Pathogens*, are also helping to reduce the amount of litter reaching the Sound.

- As a result of *National Beach Clean Up Day* in September 2001, 1,629 volunteers from New York removed 39,351 pounds of debris from 73 miles of the shoreline along the Sound at 43 sites. Due to the events of September 11, eight organizations cancelled their cleanups in New York, as many participants and beach captains were called to duty in response to the tragedy.

- In Connecticut, 331 volunteers removed 3,050 pounds of trash from 14 miles of shoreline. The scheduled cleanup at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport, CT was cancelled due to the park's designation as a staging area for the September 11 emergency response. Half the usual number of Connecticut participants volunteered in 2001, as a number of them responded to the September 11 emergency.

- CTDEP completed development of its Clean Marina Program and updated its *Best Management Practices for Coastal Marinas* guide in 2001. The Clean Marina program will certify marinas that take steps to reduce the impacts of nonpoint source pollution and improve the environmental quality of the facility and adjacent waters. The guide encourages marina operators to accept responsibility for litter control and recycling. CTDEP plans to begin certifying marinas for the 2003 boating season.

- The amount of litter entering area waters from New York City has continued to decrease from 1995 baseline levels through the City's street sweeping efforts. The amount of streets rated *Acceptably Clean* was 85 percent in 2001, compared to 77 percent in 1995. The number of

streets rated *Filthy* in 2001 was 1.7 percent, down from a 1995 level of 4.9 percent.

- A floatable debris collection system has been installed by the City of New Rochelle at the mouth of Stephenson Brook. The County of Westchester is assessing the installation of collection system(s) on county-owned lands.

NYCDEP Floatables Collection Program

SUMMARY OF CCMP MANAGEMENT ACTIONS: FLOATABLE DEBRIS

F-1. CONTROLLING FLOATABLE DEBRIS FROM CSOs AND STORMWATER SEWERS (CCMP TABLE 38, P. 96)
Key Elements: Ongoing programs conducted by state and municipal governments to reduce floatable debris; and long-term CSO abatement and NPDES stormwater permitting programs.

Description	2002 Planned Action
CTDEP completed development of its *Clean Marina* program in 2001. As part of this new initiative, CTDEP updated its *Best Management Practices for Coastal Marinas* guide. The guide provides best management practices for marinas to reduce pollution potential, and includes a section on reducing floatable debris. The *Clean Marina* program includes a recreational boater outreach and education component, part of which addresses control of solid waste on boats. Laminated *Clean Boating Tips* cards detailing methods to minimize the environmental impacts of common boating practices are part of the program.	CTDEPs *Best Management Practices for Coastal Marinas* encourages marina operators to accept responsibility for litter control and recycling.
New York City continues to implement actions for reducing floatables in its harbor waters and neighboring water bodies including Western Long Island Sound. NYCDEP developed a comprehensive plan to control floatables in 1997 that embodied EPA's Nine Minimum Controls as well as other activities such as improving catch basin effectiveness, booming/skimming, and CSO abatement, all of which are contributing to improved floatables conditions. In 2001 New York City: 1) continued to improve the effectiveness of its catch basins to prevent street litter from entering combined and separated sewers that would eventually be discharged as floatables to harbor waters. 2) continued to increase the number of hooded catch basins and to evaluate potential improvements to their effectiveness of retaining litter through the catch basin inventory program; 3) progressed with planning, design and construction of CSO retention facilities for the East River and Western Long Island Sound that will include discharge volume reductions and screening to reduce floatables discharges to these waters. NYCDEP's comprehensive floatables planning is also continuing for reducing floatables discharges to non-tributary waters of the East River and the City's waters in Western Long Island Sound; 4) initiated a program to evaluate its current *Interim Floatables Containment Program* and identify methods of improvement to maximize CSO floatables capture throughout the City including the upper East River and several of its tributaries; and 5) continued to retrieve debris from local waters from CSO and non-CSO sources. The Interim Floatables Containment Program features CSO containment booming and skimming in the City's tributaries and open waters of the East River and Western Long Island Sound. NYCDEP removed 431 cubic yards of debris from harbor tributary waters. The City's harbor skimmer retrieved 242 tons of debris from open water areas of the harbor.	NYCDEP's construction of a CSO retention facility for Flushing Creek continues, while planning and design continues for the Bronx River, Westchester Creek, the Hutchinson River, and Alley Creek.
New York City continued in 2001 to retrieve debris from local waters from CSO and non-CSO sources. Its current *Interim Floatables Containment Program* features CSO containment booming and skimming in the City's tributaries and open waters of the East River and Western Long Island Sound. In 2001 NYCDEP removed 431 cubic yards of debris from harbor tributary waters. The City's harbor skimmer retrieved 242 tons of debris from open water areas of the harbor in 2001.	Continue floatables containment and reduction programs.
Floatable debris is a significant problem in Westchester County. A floatable debris collection system has been installed by the City of New Rochelle at the mouth of Stephenson Brook. The County of Westchester is assessing the installation of collection system(s) on county-owned lands.	The Westchester County departments of Planning and Parks, Recreation and Conservation will apply for a grant under the New York State Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act to install two floatable debris collection systems on the Bronx River in Bronx River Parkway Reservation.

F-2. INCREASING FLOATABLE DEBRIS CLEANUP EFFORTS (CCMP TABLE 39, P. 99)

Key Elements: Anti-litter educational campaigns, annual beach clean-ups, litter control demonstration projects and storm drain stenciling programs.

Description	2002 Planned Action
National Beach Clean Up Day in September 2001 resulted in 1,629 volunteers from New York picking up over 39,351 pounds of debris at 43 sites on LIS. In Connecticut, 331 volunteers removed 3,049 pounds of debris from 14 miles of shoreline. The number of volunteers and sites was reduced in 2001 due to the events of September 11, which closed facilities and roads in NY, and to which a number of CT and NY participants volunteered their time.	Save the Sound, Inc., in cooperation with the CT Sea Grant program and the American Littoral Society in New York will promote National Clean Up Day in 2002.
The amount of litter entering area waters from New York City has continued to decrease from 1995 baseline levels through the City's street sweeping efforts. The amount of streets rated *Acceptably Clean* was 85 percent in 2001, compared to 77 percent in 1995. The number of streets rated *Filthy* in 2001 was 1.7 percent, down from a 1995 level of 4.9 percent.	Continue street sweeping programs.
NYCDEP completed a $200,000 study to measure the potential benefits of a public education or public awareness campaign that may reduce discharges of floatables to the harbor and neighboring waterbodies.	Meet with local citizens and other agencies to obtain their input on the potential campaign and identify cost sharing opportunities.